

Shermack Perfins Listing in Scott Specialized Catalog

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Maybe I am slow in finding something that everybody else already knew, but while browsing through my new 1994 *Scott Specialized Catalog*, I discovered that they have started listing Shermack perfins. The introductory section on the private perforations includes a paragraph that reads:

Perfins listed here are punched into the stamp at the same time as the perforation. The most common pattern consisted of a 7 mm square made up of 9 holes. Pins would be removed to create unique perfins for each company using the machines. The catalogue value is for the most common perfin on each stamp

I could quibble with some of the details, but I suppose that it is an adequate description for the general collector. Perfins -- called "perforated control marks" in the listings -- are listed for eight different Washington-Franklin head stamps. Most are also listed on cover. Values (used/on cover) are as follows:

343	\$ 50.00	\$400.00
344	50.00	400.00
345	750.00	
346	1250.00	
383	15.00	150.00
384	15.00	150.00
408	35.00	200.00
409	35.00	200.00

All of the prices are given in italics, which means "difficult to value accurately." I will bet that 99 percent of all Shermack perfin sales each year take place through the pages of *The Perfins Bulletin*. Perhaps we should be supplying Scott with actual perfin prices.

What surprised me is that they also list a Shermack perfin with Scott catalogue number 344 with Mailometer Type I perforations (valued at \$75.00/225.00). I knew that Mailometer was the successor to the Shermack Company, but I have never seen a Shermack perfin on a stamp with Mailometer perforations. Perhaps a member can

supply an example.

Scott has historically refused to list perfins. Just to see, I checked the listing of officials for the Canal Zone and Canada, two groups of stamps which I know exist as perfins. The listings have not change from previous years; however, the Canal Zone perfins are still mentioned but not listed. The Canadian ones are mentioned with the comment, "We do not list varieties with perforated initials." Perhaps the change in heart in the private perforation section will lead to a broader recognition of perfins in general.

On an entirely separate matter, many collectors probably know that the Postal Service completely rewrote *The Domestic Mail Manual* this year, in an effort to make it easier to read and understand. Apparently several things were left out in the process. A note in the October 14, 1993, *Postal Bulletin* restores the section on perfins to its proper place in the manual. It is now section P022.1.5, and reads:

Perforating. Postage stamps may be marked with perforation holes. The mark may not cover more than 1/4 square inch (1/2 inch by 1/2 inch of the stamp, and the diameter of the holes may not exceed 1/32 inch.